

1996

RESOLUTION: ON HARM REDUCTION

WHEREAS, We are called to ~loose the bonds of injustice n (Isaiah 58:6), to be “removers of the yoke amongst us,” and “satisfiers of the needs of the afflicted.” (Isaiah 58:9,10); for then the Lord will guide us and we will be “repairers of the breech” and “restorers of streets to live in” (Isaiah 58:11,12); and

WHEREAS, Our Teacher and Savior Jesus Christ has commanded un to ~love our neighbors as ourselves. (Matthew 22:39); and

WHEREAS, Our human family in cities, schools, prisons and homes, especially the poor, the children, and people of color, are coming to great harm, both through destructive drug abuse and through the costly war against drugs; and

WHEREAS, As an example of helpful change, the Connecticut Needle Exchange (supported by the Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference in 1992) has proven to reduce HIV and other diseases without causing an increase of addiction, is now being expanded, and is being accepted as a model by other states;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we, the delegates to the 129th Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ, do affirm this healing movement toward harm reduction and encourage our churches, our legislators, and our Public Policy Advocate to support steps such as:

- (1) an increase in accurate, strategically focused education about drugs;
- (2) an expansion of treatment and counseling for substance abuse in our prisons and in the wider community;
- (3) a reduction in the use of incarceration for minor offenses;
- (4) an increase in the use of alternatives to incarceration; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution, in appropriate form, be submitted for action to the General Synod XXI of the United Church of Christ.